



The Honorable Laura Cox
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909

May 2, 2018

Re: SB 897 (Substitute S-2): Med. Assistance Work Requirements

Dear Representative Cox and the House Appropriations Committee,

On behalf of the 1,111 individuals living with cystic fibrosis (CF) in Michigan, the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation opposes SB 897 (Substitute S-2): "Med. Assistance Work Requirements" which would add work requirements as a condition of Medicaid eligibility and a lock-out period for failure to comply.

Cystic fibrosis (CF) is a life-threatening genetic disease that affects 30,000 children and adults in the United States. CF causes the body to produce thick, sticky mucus that clogs the lungs and digestive system, which can lead to life-threatening infections. As a complex, multi-system condition, CF requires targeted, specialized treatment and medications. Medicaid is a crucial source of coverage for patients with serious and chronic health care needs, including over 200 adults living with cystic fibrosis in Michigan. Given the role that Medicaid plays in helping this patient population access the high-quality care and treatment they need to maintain or improve their health, we urge you to reject this proposal as it would create additional barriers to eligibility and access to medically necessary benefits.

Many people with CF work full or part-time; however, the ability to work can vary over time with changes in health status. Declines in health status due to pulmonary exacerbations, infections, and other events are common and can take someone out of the workforce for significant periods of time. Patients bear a significant daily treatment burden, amounting to hours of chest physiotherapy, delivery of nebulized treatments, administration of intravenous antibiotics, and/or other activities required to maintain or improve their health. Sustaining employment may not be possible due to the time required to undergo necessary treatment. Medicaid coverage and a person's ability to access medically necessary care should not be contingent upon a person's ability to work.

This legislation would also require monthly verification that enrollees are meeting the work requirement and quarterly verification of family income, placing an excessive administrative burden on both individuals and the Medicaid program. These verification requirements will draw resources away from program benefits and place undue burden on beneficiaries. We fear complex documentation and administrative processes may cause some eligible beneficiaries to lose coverage, including people with cystic fibrosis for which access to health care is critical.¹

¹ Kaiser Family Foundation. *Medicaid and Work Requirements: New Guidance, State Waiver Details and Key Issues* (Online). January 2018. Available: <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/medicaid-and-work-requirements-new-guidance-state-waiver-details-and-key-issues/>

Furthermore, we are concerned with the proposal to lock an individual out of Medicaid for one-year should they fail to meet the work or income reporting requirements. For people with cystic fibrosis, consistent care and access to specialized therapies is a necessity and any loss or gap in coverage may put people with CF at risk of declining health. Implementing a lock out period for people with a life-threatening condition like CF because they were unable to satisfy work or income reporting requirements is excessively punitive and prioritizes spending cuts to Medicaid over patients' access to care.

The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation appreciates the opportunity to provide input on these important policy changes. As the health care landscape continues to evolve, we look forward to working with the state of Michigan to ensure access to high-quality, specialized CF care and improve the lives of all people with cystic fibrosis. Please consider us a resource moving forward.

Sincerely,

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